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UNCLAS VIENNA 002254

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR NEA AND EUR/AGS - VIKMANIS-KELLER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [IR](#) [AU](#)

SUBJECT: AUSTRIAN PARLIAMENTARIAN DEMANDS CHARGES AGAINST  
IRANIAN PRESIDENT-ELECT

This cable is Sensitive but Unclassified. Please handle accordingly.

[1](#)1. (U) A Greens parliamentarian has asked the Austrian state prosecutor's office to open a criminal case against Iranian President-elect Mahmoud Ahmedinejad for involvement in the 1989 murders of three Kurdish leaders in Vienna. Pilz claims to have received information from a person he has identified as "Witness D," a former Teheran journalist who had an "insider's knowledge" of the planning and outcome of the murder plot.

[1](#)2. (U) On July 13, 1989, three men were shot and killed: Abdul Rahman Ghassemlou, General Secretary of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan/Iran; his deputy, Abdullah Ghaderi-Azar; and Fadel Rasoul. The suspected murderers took refuge in the Iranian Embassy in Vienna, and later were able to return to Iran in the absence of hard evidence. "Witness D" claims that it was Mahmoud Ahmedinejad who delivered the murder weapon from the Iranian Embassy in Vienna to the trigger men. "Witness D" further claims that Ahmedinejad was at the scene of the crime, armed with an automatic weapon in order to gun down the victims if they tried to escape. In the event, however, he never had to fire his weapon.

[1](#)3. (U) "Witness D" is now in France, Pilz says, and does not want to leave. However, he is "at the disposal" of Austrian authorities, Pilz says.

[1](#)4. (U) Pilz has provided information to the prosecutor in his capacity as a private citizen, not in a parliamentary capacity. The prosecutor can choose whether or not to proceed with the case. Pilz has told the press that Austrian authorities have opened an investigation, and his office has said the same to us privately. However, neither the Interior Ministry, the Justice Ministry nor the Foreign Ministry has been able to confirm to us that this is the case.

[1](#)5. (U) The Austrian press has reported Ahmedinejad's denial of complicity in the 1989 Vienna murders, as well as in the 1979 Embassy Tehran hostage taking.  
Brown